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and this hydrogen, when passing into the gaseous state, carries with it a great quantity of electricity. Now it cannot be doubted that lightning is produced by the electric fluid.— But as to the rain that is formed, the moment when the lightning traverses the air, it can only arise from two causes; either from the sudden precipitation of the water which was dispersed in the atmosphere; or from a combination of the oxygen and hydrogen gas, occasioned by the electric spark. Libes remarks that the rain of a storm takes place very frequently without there having been previously any cloud to disturb the transparency of the atmosphere; yet it cannot be supposed that the water, which is in very small quantities and perfectly dissolved in the air, can be so precipitated at once, as to form an abundant rain. Hence he recurs on the contrary to the electric spark, which in its passage, effected with an inconceivable rapidity, meets with mixtures of oxygen and hydrogen gas, the combination of whose bases becomes effected and give birth to violent explosions, as well as to a quantity of rain proportional to the quantity of æriform fluids that have served to produce the shower. This hypothesis explains clearly how there may be lightning without thunder, though there may be many clouds in the air; and why there should be many thunder-storms in hot countries, while there are but few in cold ones.

March 24, 1810.

G.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

Wishing to introduce to our Readers the improved system of managing jails, evinced by practical experiment, and as the moral discipline of a prison is essentially connected with a plan to mitigate the severity of the penal code, which plan we sincerely rejoice to find is in agitation, we are induced to give extracts from a pamphlet published some years ago entitled,

A VISIT TO THE PHILADELPHIA PRISON, IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND, BY ROBERT J. TURNBULL, OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

EXTERNALLY this prison presents itself as a very strong and

secure building, constructed of stone, with a ground floor and two stories; and rather resembling an incomplete hollow parallelogram than any other form, with a north front on Walnut, and a south one on Prune street.— The principal front on Walnut-street, measures 190 feet in length, and 40 feet in depth. The east and west sides or wings of the same depth, respectively, extend at right angles with the main front, 95 feet in a southern-direction, and then join stone walls of 20 feet in height, running to the south-east, and south-west corners. The west wing is on South Sixth street. These three sides are appropriated for the confinement of criminals, vagrants, &c. and whose outward appearance does not much resemble a prison, but is neat, handsome, and no inconsiderable ornament to the city.

Nearly contiguous to the east wing, is a brick edifice of two stories, raised upon arches, of about 40 feet in length, and 25 in breadth, set apart for the purpose of solitary confinement. The south front on Prune-street, is partly the wall, and partly the debtor's apartment, a stone building originally intended for a work-house, about 45 feet in length, and 55 in depth. The whole of the buildings, stand on a lot of 200 feet by 400; 100 feet of the south part of which is divided off for the use of the debtors, by a wall running east and west.

Having been previously prepared with a permit, procured by a friend from one of the committee of Inspectors, to visit the prison, we delivered it at the door, when orders were immediately given to a turnkey, to conduct us through the different parts of it. We were first shown through the grand entry, secured by an iron grated door about midway, and from thence (across a court or passage running from one end of the front to the other) directly into the yard of the prison. Conceive my friend, the pleasant sensations which by turns took possession of our minds at the time, when I declare, that instead of having our eyes pulled as we might naturally expect, by the gloomy appearance of

the walls of a jail yard, we found ourselves amidst a small industrious community. At the south-west corner of the yard stood a wooden building, in which is established a manufactory of nails on an extensive plan. Here are manufactured cut nails of all descriptions, and particularly brads, of an excellent quality; the whole by a method easy and expeditious. We were informed by the superintendent of this manufactory, that about five hundred weight of nails were daily produced by the labour of the criminals.

Next to the manufactory is a blacksmith's shop, while in other parts of the yard are erected small sheds, where the occupations of sawing marble, cutting stone, &c. were pursued in their respective branches.—In short, there was such a spirit of industry visible on every side, and such contentment pervaded the countenances of all, that it was with difficulty I divested myself of the idea, that these men *surely were not* convicts, but accustomed to labour from their infancy.

Previous to proceeding further with an account of the prison and its government, it will here be necessary to digress and remind you, that the criminal laws of Pennsylvania, are established on so firm a foundation of lenity, as to abrogate the punishment of death for every crime except cool and deliberate murder.—On the first emigration to, and settlement of the country by William Penn, the charter from King Charles II. strictly enjoined the establishment of the statute and common law of the mother country. This was ill relished by such a friend of the human race as Penn, who wished for a more mild and rational code of criminal laws. Possessing a pure and enlightened mind, he engaged in the task, and produced a system, which confined the loss of life, as a punishment to deliberate murder only.—This departure however, as might be expected, met with little or no encouragement in England; on the new code being transmitted to Queen Anne for royal approbation (as was usually done with all laws, and indeed required by the charter) it met with

her decided displeasure, and was consequently annulled. It was notwithstanding some short time after, again enacted, and continued in force for upwards of thirty years, when a very long and warm dispute on the same subject, having arisen between the governor of the colony and the throne, the latter succeeded, and insisted upon, and established the laws prescribed in the charter in their fullest extent.

In this situation did affairs remain until the bands of connection between Great Britain and America, were dissolved by the declaration of independence. Then, in the full possession of a liberty, the prospect of which had induced the original inhabitants of Pennsylvania to fly from Europe, the revival of the former penal code, which had remained in so long and obscure an oblivion, was immediately deemed an object of the first importance. Several circumstances combined, to make the proposed alteration expedient, and among others, the small and valuable gift of the immortal Beccaria to the world, had its due influence and weight;—for on the framing of the (then) new constitution of the state, in 1776, the legislature were directed to proceed as soon as might be, to the reformation of the penal laws, and to invent punishments less sanguinary, and better proportioned to the various degrees of criminality. The ravages of a ruinous and unnatural conflict, with the subsequent distress occasioned by it, in a great degree postponed the carrying into effect these humane intentions, till the year 1786, when the foundation of this long desired reform was at length laid by an act of the legislature. By this act a mitigation was so far accomplished, as to reserve the punishment of death for four crimes, namely, murder, rape, arson, and treason; while all other offences were directed to be punished with whipping, imprisonment, and hard labour. Unfortunately, however, for the friends of humanity, the new system of mildness was far from having the justice of a fair experiment, and was found by no means to embrace the views of its supporters. The number of convicts had in some

degree diminished, but in so *very* trifling a proportion, as not to render it an object worthy of legislative attention to continue lessening the then existing severity. A grand and important defect, though not generally observed, appeared too plain to some of the promoters of the plan, to inspire them with sanguine expectations of its success. It was the inefficacy of the punishments of public labour, mutilation and whipping, inasmuch as they destroyed an important end of punishment, that of the criminal's reformation. Too fatally was this experienced! The convicts who were sentenced to the wheel-barrow, and chained and dispersed along the streets and roads, exhibited, from the difficulty of superintending them, the most shameful scenes of drunkenness, indelicacy, and other excesses in vice. The inconveniences and mischievous effects of the punishment of public labour, at length became so intolerable, that it was regarded, and with much justice, as a common nuisance. In consequence of which, complaints against the alteration of the ancient penal code became daily more universal, and so much so at one time, as to threaten almost immediate destruction to all the schemes of the humane.

The Quakers had been the original advocates for the proscription of severity. The same motives which had uniformly distinguished the character of these people in their support of all charitable institutions, induced them still to keep the lead in a pursuit, equally noble and praiseworthy. Their spirit of perseverance then, when they had in contemplation the advancement of good order and humanity, was not to subside, even at this provoking trial of discouragement. The rapid growth and magnitude of the evil, served rather as a new incentive to awaken them more and to convince them, that without indefatigable pains, their important ends could never be accomplished. Necessity, which generally and bountifully gives a new tone and vigour to the genius, was not in this instance dilatory in the production of a remedy. Aided by other respectable and influential characters of the community,

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the quakers formed themselves into a society for alleviating the miseries of public prisons, the object of which was, to inquire into the abuses of prisons and public places of confinement, and to report them to the legislature, with a petition for redress; and also to examine the influence of confinement or imprisonment, on the morals of the persons who were the subjects of them.

The exertions of the society, after considerable opposition, procured from the legislature an amendment to the penal code, by an act of the 5th of April 1790, which abolished the former punishments, and established in lieu of them, private labour, fine and imprisonment. This law, it may be said, was forced from the legislature; for nothing but their confidence in the individuals who composed this association, could have persuaded them to risk a further experiment.—Anticipating few or no good consequences from the substitution of a mild discipline, instead of death, severity and irons, they thought it prudent, and took care to limit the existence of the law, for the space of five years. The act, after laying down several general regulations for the government of prisons, entrusts in the hands of a Board of inspectors, “the power of making, at their quarterly or other meetings, such further orders and regulations, for the purpose of carrying the act into execution, as should be approved by the Mayor and Recorder of the city.”—By a supplement to the act, passed in September 1791, the same power is transferred from the mayor and recorder, to the mayor, two aldermen, and two of the judges of the supreme court, or two of the judges of the court of common pleas of Philadelphia county.

I hinted that a considerable opposition had disputed the establishment of this mitigated mode of treatment. It existed for a length of time; and the most powerful proceeded, not so much from ignorance, prejudice, or want of benevolence (for its opposers were respectable and humane) as from the trifling prospect and hope, which a mistaken and too despicable opinion of persons guilty of offences,

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had led many to have, and entertain of its fortunate issue.

Among the services of several persons, who early formed an attachment to the principles of the society, those of the late attorney general of the United States, the worthy and much respected William Bradford, deceased, are sufficiently well known, to merit the recollection and gratitude of his countrymen. Being at that time judge of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, he had occasion to differ on this point, with his brethren on the bench, who denied their consent from none but the purest and most patriotic motives, such as their tried knowledge of crimes and criminals had prompted them conscientiously to respect. On the first appearance of the favourable symptoms which the triumph of their adversaries had effected in the government and conduct of the prisoners, they coincided, and afterwards contributed much to its maintenance.

To pass over the conduct of the enlightened doctor Benjamin Rush, might properly be deemed an act of omission. Although the pressing duties of his profession called for his humane assistance in other quarters, he was no less eager to appropriate occasionally, a few leisure hours, on the subject of a scheme so pregnant with the future happiness of millions, and which simply required public spirit and perseverance to deliver to mankind. With this view he came forward at a very critical juncture, and published a small pamphlet, called "An Inquiry into the Effects of public Punishments upon Criminals and Society;" in which, after displaying with a philosophic calmness, the greatest acquaintance with the springs of the human heart, he fully demonstrates their inutility and mischievous tendency. A few years' growth of the system which abolished them, has already established the truth of his principles.

Upon the whole, the promoters of this last grand work of philanthropy met with so much success in the experiment, and its operations produced so visible a change in the criminal dockets throughout the state, that the legislature, so far from suffering their

intended temporary law to expire without renewal, extended their lenity still further, and by the memorable act of the 22d of April, 1794, abolished the punishment of death for every crime, excepting murder of the first degree. Any kind of murder perpetrated by means of poison, by lying in wait, or by any other kind of wilful, deliberate, and premeditated killing, committed in the perpetration, or attempt to perpetrate any arson, rape, robbery, or burglary, is declared to be murder of the first degree. Persons guilty of other offences are therefore now divided into classes. Of the first class are all persons guilty of offences, which previous to the passing of the law, were punishable with death; and also those guilty of other heinous offences mentioned in the act. These undergo a punishment compounded of hard labour and solitary confinement, for a certain term of years. Those of the second class, are convicts condemned for offences less criminal, who are merely subjected to hard labour. As to the measure for each particular crime or misdemeanor, it is principally discretionary with the judges of the court, before whom they are tried, under the restrictions laid down in the first of the subjoined tables.

With these prefatory observations on the nature, progress, and gradual improvement, of the criminal laws of Pennsylvania, I shall be more in order to proceed with my description of the prison. From viewing the yard, our curiosity naturally led us to examine the interior apartments of the building. We first went through the ground floor, or front half story, chiefly appropriated for kitchens, which were exceedingly clean. Some men were busily employed in carrying plaister of Paris in lumps along this passage, to an apartment in the east end of the story, where it is ground by others, in a mill fixed for the purpose. There were several other rooms, but nothing material engaged our notice.

We next ascended the first whole story, with which there is no communication with the under, except by a flight of steps outside in the yard.

At the back part of this, as well as the other floors, there are long courts or passages, extending from one end of the front to the other, about the width of 12 feet. Along the passage here, are ranged eight apartments, three of which being occupied as the apartments of the jailer, and one made use of as the inspector's room, have no entrance to them withinside of the iron-grated door. The rest open into the passage, and are workshops, with instruments and tools for carpenters, joiners, turners, shoemakers, weavers and taylor's. These different trades we saw carried on with all the industry imaginable. There were also persons in the court, employed in chipping logwood. The work shops are of the dimensions of 20 feet, by 19 feet; neat, healthy, and airy;—perfectly secure from fire and an escape, by being arched over with stone, and having double iron gratings to the windows. No communication with them can be effected by persons in the street.

The upper story contains the same number of rooms, ranged in like manner as the lower apartments; the first of which, at the west end, is set apart as an infirmary, for the reception of sick prisoners, and the rest bed rooms. In each of the rooms are about one dozen beds with mattresses, sheets, and rugs; every prisoner being allowed a single bed.—All these front stories are appropriated for none but male convicts.

The first story of the east wing contains five apartments, constructed in the same manner, in which are confined persons accused and committed for trial, who are not made to labour. In the second or upper story, are the vagrants and runaway servants. These persons are employed in beating hemp, picking moss, hair, wool, or oakum. There is a courtyard to this wing, measuring 90 by 32 feet.

We next visited the apartments of the women, in the west wing of the prison, on Sixth-street. The ground floor of this wing was formerly divided off into dungeons; but now are seldom or never entered, unless to stow away wood, or any bulky material. In the first story are four

rooms, ranged in the same manner as those of the east wing, appropriated for the use of the female convicts; besides another, used as a store room for the articles manufactured in the house. The women perform their labour in the passage; they were engaged, some in spinning cotton and mop yarn, carding wool, picking cotton, sewing, and preparing flax and hemp; others in washing and mending. They have a court yard, of the same dimensions of the one belonging to the untried criminals, and male vagrants. In the upper story of this wing are confined female vagrants, and women of bad character, who are also kept at profitable employments.

You must admire, my friend, the excellency of these arrangements.—You perceive in the first place, there is no intercourse whatever between the males and females; they cannot even see each other. None again between convicted and untried criminals; nor between either of them and the vagrants. This must at all times be a desirable object. Persons who have not been convicted of the charges they stand imprisoned for, ought not in justice, to have a connection with, and be placed among, such prisoners as have been condemned. The difference of their situation demands a separation. On the other hand, as the intention of the new system of laws is not only to punish offenders, but to restore them reformed to society, it is more absolutely necessary that the convicts should be kept apart from the vagrants.

It is well known, that in no one place are offered more injurious and vicious examples, than in a prison, where condemned, untried, and all other classes of prisoners, are intermingled, without regard either to age, sex, or condition. Those in many parts of Europe, and several in America, have long stood melancholy evidences of this fact. Thousands are committed annually for a trifling fault, or misdemeanor; many from misfortune, or accident; and we may venture to assert, that scarcely one has been dismissed, with the same stock of morality he carried in with him. Accus-

tomed to idleness, debauchery, and practice of frauds upon their keepers, upon visitors, and upon each other, the young and inexperienced criminal is early taught to imitate the dexterity of his elders; the timorous soon acquires the audacity of his more hardened companions, the modest become spectators of, and inured to the indelicacy and indecency of others, and thus, amidst such frequent opportunities for vice, are planned, not a trifling proportion of the murders, robberies, and other kinds of villainy, perpetrated after their escape or discharge.

In Philadelphia, the *separation* of the different classes of prisoners was early deemed an object of the highest importance, by all who were in any wise interested in the then contemplated reform of the prison government, and as such steadily adhered to. The inhabitants of the prison were extremely averse to the measure, and were always more emboldened in their confidence of its failing, from the countenance of their jailer and keepers, who naturally preferred the old system, as it would furnish them with a greater harvest of perquisites and exactions. Finding at length that the perseverance of "the society for alleviating the miseries of prisons," bid fair to an extinction of all hopes of their continuing in the same scene of confusion, with one consent they resolved on a breach of prison. The attempt was accordingly made on the evening of the day the new order of things had taken place. Fortunately few of them escaped. The jailer was immediately discharged, and since that period almost every project for the same purpose has failed, either from the want of unanimity of the most evil disposed, the fears of those less so, or the decided disapprobation of the greatest proportion of the prisoners, to any thing of the kind.

Nothing appears more grievous to a person, long initiated into habits of indolence and licentiousness, than the idea of being compelled to alter them. This I hold as an undoubted position; and therefore the constant and hard labour, to which a criminal is sentenced in Pennsylvania, must

be productive (and it has been) of the most beneficial effects. Although humane, it is a punishment, sufficiently dreadful and severe to excite terror into the minds of the depraved; and, besides affording an example of true justice, it is of all others the best adapted for the amendment of the convict himself. Another thing; as the design of penalties is not only to prevent the commission of crimes, and reform offenders, but likewise to make reparation for the injury done to society, or one of its members; the last of these objects, cannot be better obtained, than by the personal industry of the criminal, while under condemnation. Of this the legislature were no doubt fully persuaded, when they fell upon the present improvement, in matters of jurisprudence.

The proceeds of the labour, and services of the delinquent are not, in every instance, applied to the use of the injured public, or individual. For if after making the reparation required by his sentence; that is, if at the expiration of his confinement, and after paying the expenses of his commitment, prosecution, and trial; the value of articles stolen, or damage done to the prosecutor; the fine to the common-wealth; hire of the tools he makes use of; and, lastly, the expenses of his board, clothing, washing, and lodging, any balance, or overplus, is found to remain, or be due to him, it is either paid to him in cash or clothing. The fine to the commonwealth is generally remitted.

That part of the sentence, including the costs and expenses of prosecution, and also the expenses of feeding and clothing a convict, are advanced by the county in which he takes his trial, and are afterwards repaid by the industry of the criminal. When the prisoners sent to the prison, from other counties, have incurred a charge for their maintenance, more than the profits of their labour will defray, they are reported by the inspectors to the commissioners of the county of Philadelphia, who are authorized to procure, a reimbursement, by drawing orders upon the treasurer of the

county, from which they are removed.

The quantity of stock and materials, working tools, and implements necessary for the constant employment of the prisoners are purchased by the jailer, with the approbation of two of the inspectors, and payment for them provided by the commissioners of the proper county. He delivers out their work, and receives it from them by weight or measure, as the case might be, in order to prevent embezzlement and waste. The work assigned the prisoners is adapted to their age, sex, and circumstances of health or ability, regard being had at the same time to the employment which is most profitable.

The agreement for the most valuable species of labour, such as stone-cutting, and sawing marble, as likewise for the purchase of nails, is made between the inspector and employer. The contracts for other work, as spinning, cabinet-makers, or joiners' work, &c. are commonly entered into with the jailer.

For each convict, a separate account is kept by the jailer, charging him with his clothing, sustenance, &c. and in which a reasonable allowance for his labour is credited. It is generally rather less than the wages of other workmen in the city. These accounts are balanced at short periods, in order that the overplus or proportion, which might be due to the prisoner, may be paid into the county treasury for safe keeping; and, once in every three months, they are audited before the inspectors. The committee of inspectors, once during the same period of time, fix the charges for the prisoners' maintenance, which depend on the existing price of provisions, &c.

The clothing of the convicts is altogether manufactured in the prison, and adapted to the climate and season. In winter, the men are dressed in jackets, waistcoats and trowsers of woollen; and in summer, with coarse linen shirts and trowsers. The women in plain gowns of the same. The stuff for the whole is woven by the males, and made up by the fe-

males. There is, at the same time, not a mattress, sheet, rug, coverlid, nor any thing else in that line, but what is likewise manufactured in the house. The store-room contained a great stock, and variety of articles, in quality equal to any thing of the kind I have seen for some time. The most valuable articles, such as nails, plaister of Paris, marble, &c. are in such demand, as generally to be disposed of as soon as manufactured or prepared.

Great attention is paid to the health of the prisoners. On any person's complaining, and upon examination of the physician found to be diseased, he is removed to the infirmary of the prison, his name entered on a book kept for the purpose, and there remains until he is in a proper condition to leave it. The time is determined by the report of the physician, which, as soon as made, is entered in the keeper's book, when the prisoner must immediately resume his accustomed employment.

While at their work, the prisoners are permitted no singing or laughing, nor indeed any conversation, except such as may immediately relate to their business. This prohibition of all unnecessary converse is relied upon, as an essential point for the complete administration of the prison; and whoever will subscribe to the doctrine, that the less exertion which is given to the nerves and organs of sense, must calm the state of the system, and, by an immediate consequence, soften the disposition of the heart, will as readily consent to the policy of the regulation. But, to enter a jail, you will say, without being importuned by the frequent and insolent requests of some prisoners, or alarmed for your safety, from the daring threats and villainous means of others, can alone proceed from the most extraordinary and severe discipline: and yet in this prison it is effected with ease.

This silence, which the inspectors have been so strict in enjoining upon the labourers, has been as rigidly put in practice, and is the first circumstance that will arrest the attention of a stranger. The behaviour

and looks of the criminals, at the same time, do not border on disgust, and of course are not troublesome, as on no account are they permitted to address, or beg alms of a visiter; nor do they do it. Having been left alone with the prisoners, at different times, in their several apartments, we wanted not opportunities to discover, whether the fear of their keepers, or their own conviction of the necessity of the regulation, had the greatest weight in restraining them from a breach of it: the latter we found to predominate. None of them ever made the first advances to converse with us, and only once was a request ventured, and then by an industrious shoemaker; and for what think you?—For a piece of tobacco. Fortunately one of our company had a little, which was given him. A chew of tobacco is esteemed a luxury with most of them, but strongly forbidden by the inspectors, and perhaps with much reason. It is an idle, dirty habit, affords no nutriment to the body, and not unfrequently leads to intemperance in drinking. However contrary our gift was to the rules of the prison, and notwithstanding it might have given offence, had it been known, still we should never reproach ourselves with our conduct. He must want a heart indeed, who could not have found a disposition to relieve, if placed in a similar situation. The man was industrious, his air interesting, the manner of his request modest and becoming.

All the prisoners rise at the dawn of day; so that after making their beds, cleansing and washing themselves, and other little necessary arrangements, they generally commence their labour by sun-rise. After this no convict can go into any part of the house, other than the place or apartment assigned for his business; and particularly the nailers, carpenters, shoemakers, and weavers, who can, on no pretence whatever, leave their shops, or permit any other prisoner to come into them, without giving immediate information to their keeper, or by permission of the keeper. The rooms in which they work are not locked. About seven are in a

shop, one of whom is appointed by the jailer, whose duty it is strictly to notice all offences, and in default of it, is punished according to the rules. For this, however, there is little or no necessity, as they commonly work under the mutual inspection of each other. The keepers constantly parade among the prisoners, in the court yards and passages.

At the approach of dusk the bell is rung, when they must leave off labour, immediately repair to their rooms, and form themselves in such a manner, that the keeper may have a perfect view of every person belonging to each room. They remain thus formed, till he calls the roll, and counts them: he then locks them up in their apartments, but without candle or fire, except in extreme cold weather. From this time half an hour is allowed them to adjust their bedding, after which they are not permitted to converse aloud, or make a noise.

Four watchmen are obliged to continue in the prison all night: two are within the iron-grated door, and two in the inspector's room. In their turns they patrol the passages constantly, and strike the bell every hour. They report, on the morning of the succeeding day, any remarkable occurrence of the night, to the clerk of the prison, who commits the same to writing, and lays it before the inspectors at their next meeting.

In going through this prison, you are not disgusted with those scenes of filth and misery, which generally distinguish jails from other places. On the contrary, the industry, cheerfulness, and cleanliness, which meet the eye in every direction, cannot but be peculiarly gratifying. I assure you that my nostrils were not once invaded by the least unwholesome or even offensive smell. In the bed-rooms, the beds were all made up, and the floors white, and perfectly free from dirt. This was so surprizing, that one of our company in amazement inquired, how it was possible to enforce a regulation of this kind among so many people. "Oh, sir," answered the keeper, "our method is one and invariable.

The prisoners well know that a transgression of the rules is never overlooked, and contrive to adjust their conduct accordingly." On conversing further with him, I found that the criminals in the different rooms, for their own convenience and comfort, had adopted among themselves *secondary* and inferior governments. One of their principal regulations relative to cleanliness was, that no one who found occasion should spit elsewhere than in the chimney. The punishment annexed to the person, who thought proper to infringe this general rule, was simply an exclusion from the society and conversation of his fellow convicts, and this is found to be sufficient.

By the laws of the prison the house must be swept every day by some one of the convicts. The duty is taken in rotation. It is also washed once a week in the winter, and twice in the summer, from one end to the other; and as often in a year completely white-washed.

During the fall of 1793, when the yellow fever had extended its fatal ravages over every part of the city and suburbs of Philadelphia, we have from Mr. Carey, in his account of that calamity, that only six persons in the prison were taken sick, and sent to the hospital; although the situation of jails, even under the best administration, makes them most frequently liable to the generation of contagious and other diseases. At this time, too, were confined there, by order of the French consul, one hundred and six French soldiers and sailors, besides one hundred other prisoners, composed of convicts, vagrants, and criminals committed for trial.

The cleanliness of the prisoner's person is likewise particularly attended to. On the first admission of a convict, he is separately lodged, washed, and cleansed, and continues in such separate lodging, till it is deemed prudent to admit him among the other prisoners. The clothes in which he is committed are fumigated and laid by till his discharge. They regularly shift their linen, and are shaved twice a week. Previous to commencing their daily labour, they

are made to wash their face and hands, and in the summer months, to bathe themselves in a large bason in the court-yard provided for the purpose. Towels are fixed in the different courts. Their hair too is cut decent and short once in a month, and for the convenience of the barber, the whole number of men is generally divided into four equal parts; so that one-fourth part have their hair cut every week.

Independent of the individual comfort naturally arising from a strict attention to cleanliness, and its powerful conduciveness to health, it is more absolutely necessary among criminals, than with other persons. In a prison government, which contemplates the amendment of its subjects, it cannot with propriety be neglected.

We witnessed a circumstance, which would not only excite the astonishment of all, but must impress every visiter's mind with a favourable opinion of the administration of the prison. It is the humanity of the keepers to the convicts.

Yes, my friend, I *have* been in a prison, where the heart of a turn-key is like that of another man, and where humanity is the standing order of the day.

It is the chief object of the keepers, to command as much respect as possible from the criminal, and yet without laying him under any undue fear or restraint. By these means the convict becomes insensibly and gradually attached to him, and his mind better prepared to receive any impression he might wish to make. The result of which is, that a keeper seldom speaks to a prisoner, but what he is answered with respect and with mildness.

Although reformed in other respects, many of them persevere in attesting their innocence, when addressed by a stranger.

Another incident occurred in our visit to the women's apartment, which no less evinced the good treatment these people meet with. The keeper who conducted us through this ward, had been absent for some time, and had accidentally called on a visit to the prison. The women

were about retiring from their labour; no sooner was the voice of this person heard on entering, than it was recollected by a decent looking young woman, standing in the passage, and in a moment *Davies* (for that was his name) was whispered through all the apartments. With the most heartfelt expressions of joy, they hastened from their seats to welcome him on his return, and on his part he received them with a mixed sense of tenderness and satisfaction. What a feast would this have been for a Howard's heart!

The male convicts are allowed, for breakfast and supper, as much as they can eat of a pudding made of the meal of maize corn, called mush. At dinner they have, three days in the week, about half a pound of bread, with a pint of potatoes; on other days mush and potatoes: on Sunday, a pound of wholesome meat is distributed to each prisoner. Those among them who behave themselves well are, at times, permitted the indulgence of procuring other provisions, at their own expense, but the practice is not common. The nourishment of the women is of the same quality with that of the males, only not as considerable, from their services being less laborious. Contracts for the food of all the prisoners are entered into by the jailer, and the whole paid for by the inspectors.

The drink of the criminals is molasses and water; spirituous liquors are forbidden, except for medical purposes, prescribed by the attending physician; and the person who sells, or suffers them to be introduced, on any other occasion, subjects himself to a penalty of five pounds: if an officer of the prison, dismission from office. The reason of this rigorous regulation arises, in the first place, from the probability of the abuse which might be made of the practice, were it once introduced; and, in the next place, from the conviction of the inspectors, that those liquors act not so powerfully in strengthening a body, doomed to more than ordinary toil and labour, as the effects of good wholesome water. That whatever cheerfulness

or vigour it may produce in a labourer, it is merely temporary, and like all high stimulatives, its operations are no sooner at an end, than the system is left enervated and fatigued. Nor are the inspectors governed by less reasonable motives in their choice of a cheap diet, and the exclusion of much animal food from the convicts. The citizen who once makes a violation of the family compact has left but a very slender claim on the public attention: the only one, if it may be so called, is their obligation to restrict him from further opportunities of incommoding them, by reformation or other means; at the same time with the least possible expense to themselves. Happily the regulation fallen upon by the inspectors, with respect to the subsistence of the convicts, has appeared more likely to assist, in arriving at this *desideratum* of prison governments, than many others through the same medium of diet, although more economical; that is to say, the two ideas of *economy* and *utility* are by it more closely connected.

The convicts are called to their meals by the ringing of a bell. We saw the men sit down to their supper, and I do not recollect a scene more interesting. At one view we beheld about ninety fellow-creatures, formerly lost, as it were, to their country, and the world, now collected into one body, and observing that air of *composure* and decency to each other, consequent only from a long and continued practice of moral habits. They were seated agreeably to classes, or rather, the shoe-makers, stone-cutters, nailers, carpenters, and weavers, formed each a distinct class. During the time of eating, we witnessed no laughing, nor even an indecent gesture; but a perfect and respectful silence reigned along the benches. They remained seated until all were ready to rise, of which notice was given by the attending keeper. They then immediately repaired to their respective employments. Their eating room is the left part of the court of the front ground-floor or half story.

A person would conclude, that among these prisoners, made up of

the dregs of society, there could not possibly exist the harmony and good order which pervades and is visible in every part of the prison, and naturally inquire, by what means this decency of deportment can be brought about. I will answer you, my dear sir: not by such corporal punishment as whipping. This is now entirely unknown in the prison: the keepers are not even allowed to lay violent hands on any of the criminals. I have often wondered, for my part, that, in civilized countries, such a mode of punishment should be countenanced—one that originated among savages. To expose the bare back of a human creature to the lash of a whip, or cow-skin, is, to me, horrid; I never saw it executed, without feeling every sense of indignation. Can it be supposed, that, after fixing upon a man so indelible a stigma as the furrows of the lash, any hope of reformation can be cherished? Is not all his spirit destroyed, while labouring under an infamy of the kind? And will it not finally force him to despair, and consequently oblige him to seek revenge; by repeatedly harrassing the race who occasioned it? Where, I ask, is the victim to the scourge, who has not become more hardened and depraved.

Besides, the slightest examination into the springs of human action will fully demonstrate the uselessness of this mode of punishment. We know that there are in every man, even in the most hardened offenders, some few sparks of honour, a certain consciousness of the intrinsic beauty of moral goodness, which though they may be latent and apparently extinguished, yet may at any time be kindled and roused into action, by the application of a proper stimulus. This stimulus must not be such a one as would, in its operations, suppress any of those passions with which it ought to act in unison; but, on the contrary, should awaken them as much as possible. A very predominant one is emulation: destroy that, and you at once paralyze the efforts of the soul, and place the axe to the root of all that is good and great. It is this passion which

spurs us to every worthy action; governs all ranks, from the prince to the peasant; and to which we are indebted for a great part of the improvements which have taken place among mankind.

The managers of the prison have so great a confidence in the efficacy of mild and gentle measures of treatment, that they will not suffer, on any account, such a constraintive measure as placing a criminal in irons; conceiving it by no means calculated to produce in the mind of the convict, the amelioration which is thought so essential for his amendment. Nor are the keepers permitted to carry sabres, pistols, or weapons of any kind, as is customary in prisons, nor even a cane, for fear that on a trifling provocation they might be induced to beat a criminal.

The keepers and turnkeys, my dear sir, are not similar in any respect to those in other countries; for independent of the little inclination they might have to ill-treat a criminal, the strong recommendations required for their sobriety and humanity, being always necessary to the appointment of proper persons to fill those offices, still they would find the abuse almost impracticable, from the unremitting vigilance and attention of the inspectors. The appointment too of the jailer is more particularly attended to, as upon him, in a great measure, devolves a duty, which, if well executed, cannot fail to ensure a more complete success, to the new mode of discipline. His salary, therefore, is fully adequate to his services, as are those of the inferior officers. The total prohibition again of all perquisites, whether arising from the purchase of favours, or the retailing of spirituous liquors, dismission fees, and in fact extortions of any kind; the unqualified proscription of fetters, beating, and all arbitrary conduct whatever, and the end of the institution, aiming at the reformation instead of the debasement of criminals, makes the jailer's duty an humane one, and of course renders the place an object with many worthy persons in the community; when in most parts of the world,

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the nature of their prison governments partakes of so much depravity, that the very existence of them depends on the exclusion of men of sensibility from those stations.

On the first entrance of a convict, the inspectors receive from a proper officer of the court, before whom the conviction was had, a brief report of the circumstances attending his crime; particularly such as tend to palliate or aggravate it, with other information respecting his behaviour on his trial, and his general conduct previous to and after receiving the sentence of the court. This knowledge of the prisoner's character and disposition, while it affords them an opportunity of ascertaining the degree of care, which may be requisite for the annihilation of his former bad habits, is yet attended with another advantage, that it early evinces to the criminal the strictness with which he may afterwards expect to be treated. He is then informed of, and made fully acquainted with the rules and government of the prison, and at the same instant no pains are wanting, on the part of the inspectors, to enforce upon his mind the strength of moral obligations; the breach he has made of those obligations; the consequent injury done thereby to the society which protected him; the forfeit he has made of that protection; and the necessity of making a compensation by his example or amendment. Add to this, every encouragement is given him to perform his duty with alacrity, and to observe a decency of conduct towards his keeper and co-associates. Animated also with a promise and hope, that an enlargement before the expiration of the term he is sentenced to, will most probably follow a long and uninterrupted line of good behaviour, the prisoner easily becomes sensible of the policy of a respectful, industrious deportment.

The inspectors, it ought to have been mentioned, are authorized to intercede with the executive power for the pardon of reformed convicts, and are generally able by their influence to obtain it. The right nevertheless they never exercise, but with extreme caution, and unless, from

the repeated reports of the jailer and keepers, they are persuaded that a prisoner has uniformly demeaned himself with propriety, has repented of his past follies, and in fact that a visible change and complete amendment has taken place.

At times the inspectors, in their tour of duty, make it a point to discourse with all the criminals, one by one separately, in order to assure them of their relative duties, considered as men, moralists, and members of society. The exhortations, on these occasions, proceed from them with such a philanthropic calmness, so much warmth of heart, that their appearance among the convicts never fails to cast a fresh beam of comfort on every countenance. Richard H. M****, esq. entered while we were in the women's ward. He had the jail book in one hand, and a pencil in the other. This is customary with the inspectors on duty. Among others, a young negress accosted him on the subject of her confinement. With simplicity was her tale delivered—with attention was it listened to. Her sentence, if I mistake not, was two years imprisonment, nine months only of which had been complied with. No exception was ever taken to her conduct since her first entrance; it had been regularly pleasing. But the demand for a discharge was certainly unreasonable, and in that light viewed by Mr. M. and all of us. On his expostulating with her, on the impropriety of remitting so great a proportion of the sentence, she declared herself satisfied with his reasoning, and resumed her employment at the spinning-wheel with cheerfulness and activity. Such, my friend, is the result of deliberate persuasion in matters of this kind.

A criminal again, is well aware that wantonly to insult, or thwart the precepts of an inspector, would, in addition to the penalties annexed to this transgression by the rules of the house, render him despicable in the eyes of his brother convicts; a consideration of serious weight with all of them.

All means are used by the inspectors to promote moral and religious

improvement in the prison, by the introduction of useful books amongst those who request them, and the procuring the regular performance of divine service. To assist them in the pursuit of the latter arrangement, the task is voluntarily undertaken every Sunday forenoon and afternoon, by some one of the society of quakers, or the clergy of different denominations, and sometimes by the bishop. The service consists of a sermon, and a lecture, on subjects suited to the situation of the convicts. All the convicts, and other prisoners, both male and female, are compelled to give attendance, and arrange themselves according to classes. This is the only time in the week that the different classes of prisoners have a view of each other. From one of the inspectors I learned, that their attention to the speaker, and decency of conduct, on these occasions, is peculiarly striking to a by-stander. The place appointed for the purpose is the long court of the first front story.

After so many different methods of inculcating morality among the inhabitants of the jail, a very strong motive to the effecting of which is found to be the good example and reformation of the major part of them, you may inquire, are there not men, nevertheless, so hardened as to require a much more forcible restraint from vice than this? Is there no motive of fear to govern characters like these? No punishment?—Yes, my friend, there is a principle not only of fear, but of horror; there is a dreaded punishment, as shall be explained to you.

When a convict has committed an offence, by refusing to labour, by profane cursing and swearing, or by quarrelling and abusive words, &c. he is first warned of it by the inspectors, the jailer, or the keeper, but no harsh words are spoken by either of them, to damp the spirit of, or expose the prisoners. On the contrary, I repeat, that every mild measure is made use of to persuade them from the same error, and how much it is their interest to adhere to an uniform good behaviour. If this fails in bringing a criminal to a

proper sense of his misconduct, and he is observed to be still callous, and likely to continue so, recourse is finally had to a punishment, which places him in a situation where nothing but reflection can occupy his mind, and which must necessarily compel him to listen to the advice of another monitor. This is by solitary confinement, which leads me to describe you the cells which we last of all visited.

These cells are contained in a brick building of two stories, raised upon arches, and early directed by the legislature to be built, for the purpose of this mode of punishment. It is contiguous to the east wing of the prison, and situated in a yard of the dimensions of one hundred and eighty feet by seventy. The greatest part of the yard is appropriated for a garden, managed by some of the convicts, wherein are a variety of fruits and vegetables. In number the cells are sixteen, and from their peculiar construction and solitary situation, appear to me to be better calculated to bring an offender to a review of himself and conduct, than any punishment that can possibly be contrived. The dimensions of them are eight feet in length, six in breadth, and ten in height, with no ground floor, strong thick partition walls and arched over with brick. They are all ranged along passages five feet wide, in the first and second stories of the building. The entrance at the head of each stair-case is well secured, by a strong door with locks and bolts, and the entry to each passage with two other doors, one of wood, fastened by a chain to another of iron. To each cell, again, there is a wooden and iron door, the latter secured by a long bar fitting a staple in the wall, about two feet from the door and fastened, some of them with padlocks, and others by bars running through the staples down to the floor. In every cell there is one small window, placed high up and out of the reach of the convict; the window well secured by a double iron grating, so that, provided an effort to get to it was successful, the person could perceive neither heaven or earth,

on account of the thickness of the wall, and a *lower* outside admitting the light in an oblique direction from above. The criminal, while confined here, is permitted no convenience of bench, table, or even bed, or any thing else but what is barely necessary to support life, without a risk of endangering his health. A privy is placed at one corner of his apartment, leading to the common sewer communicating with the river, which may be cleansed at pleasure by turning a cock fixed to a pipe: this pipe is conveyed to a cistern, placed in the upper part of the building, near the roof, filled with water by a pump descending through the entries of each story to a well under the building. The situation of these cells is high and healthy, not subject to damps, as dungeous under ground generally are. They are finished with lime and plaster; white-washed twice a year; and in every respect as clean as any part of the prison. In winter, stoves are placed in the passages, to keep the cells warm, from which the convicts may receive a necessary degree of heat, without being able to get at the fire. No communication whatever between the persons in the different cells can be effected, the walls being so thick as to render the loudest voice perfectly unintelligible; and as to any other sound, excepting the keeper's voice, and the unlocking of doors, they seldom hear. That the criminal may be prevented from seeing any person as much as possible, his provisions are only brought him once a day, and that in the morning.

You may conceive, my friend, what an effect the punishment of being confined in one of these cells must have on a refractory offender. For, besides every consideration of a dreary solitude and a want of comfort, and which must necessarily produce in a mind, thus forced to its own meditations, an uneasy remembrance of the convict's crime and errors, there is added a more painful one; that is, only half an allowance of provisions, consisting of bread and water. The utility of the punishment has been fully demon-

strated by experiment; for a prisoner was seldom known to continue long in a cell, before he has early become sensible of the difference of his situation, and would willingly have returned to that regularity of conduct and industry, which his misguided folly had induced him to depart from. Several of the most hardened and audacious criminals, on whom all other modes of discipline were attended with effects the very reverse of what they were designed to produce, and who in fact were held as objects incapable of amendment, have been, by the simple punishment of *solitary* confinement, transformed into such a calmness of disposition, as to have become entire new beings, and the least troublesome afterwards among the prisoners. We saw three persons in the cells: they pleaded hard for their enlargement once more among their fellow convicts, and offered to conform to any labour, to be released from their miserable mansions.

As to the quantum of confinement necessary to reform a prisoner, it is determined at the discretion of the jailer, who is notwithstanding obliged to inform the inspectors of it as soon as convenient. For a criminal who refuses to labour, it is generally 48 hours, and for other offences in a like proportion, according to the exigence of the case. It operates extremely to the prejudice of a convict to undergo this punishment, as he incurs by it a loss of the expenses of his board, washing, and lodging, which are still charged to his debt, and to make up which must consequently render his industry and services the greater after being again employed.

Besides those ordered into the *cens* for transgressing the rules of the house, there are other persons, whose original sentence includes the article of solitary confinement, as well as hard labour. These are the convicts contemplated by the law as belonging to the first class; such as persons guilty of rape, arson, and other offences, of which I have already spoken. They are not made, however, to undergo the whole of their term of confinement at first, although the greatest proportion is generally re-

quired, before they are permitted to labour. The inspectors have the power to direct the infliction of it at such intervals, and in the manner they shall judge best, provided the whole term is complied with, during the stay of the criminal in prison. Persons of this description and class, are upon their request furnished with a book to read, generally the New Testament.

There is not, perhaps, a physical cause, which has so powerful an influence on the moral faculty, as that of *solitary* confinement; inasmuch as it is the only one which can give a friendly communication with the heart. We become by it gradually acquainted with a true knowledge of ourselves; with the purity of the dictates prescribed to us by our consciences; and of course easier convinced of the necessity of conforming to them. It is in this state of seclusion from the world, that the mind can be brought to contemplate itself, to judge of its powers, and thence to acquire the resolution and energy necessary to protect its avenues from the intrusion of vicious thoughts; for "the actions of men are nothing more than their thoughts brought into substance and being."

We completed, by a view of the solitary cells, our whole tour through the prison. We were an hour going through the different apartments; and I declare to you, that never did I before visit a place which gave me as much satisfaction; never once in a manufactory, in which industry and her almost inseparable companions, good Order and Contentment, appeared to have so firm an abode. I had heard much of the place before I went, but confess it exceeded every idea I had formed of it; and to convey you the same perfect idea of the institution I have, is not in my power. Suffice it to say, that our compassion was appealed to by no distressing tale of tyranny, or ill usage, no cries of poverty, no sighs nor tears of wretchedness: on the contrary, we witnessed all that could delight and gratify the mind. Cleanliness not often equalled, even in private houses; labour ever steady and constant; inspectors instructing;

keepers persuading; and criminals receiving, with attention and thankfulness, precepts for their future regulation and conduct: in a word, the whole presenting one picturesque scene of humanity, justice, benevolence, and gratitude.

Government or the public contribute not one shilling towards the maintenance of the jailer, keepers, &c. or to the payment of their salaries and other expenses. The money is simply advanced by them.

By the books and accounts of the Philadelphia prison it appears, that the yearly aggregate of the disbursements has not, for several years past, amounted to as much as it did formerly; notwithstanding the alteration made in the modes of punishment throughout the state has rendered it expedient to maintain more persons in confinement, and for longer periods. For this reason, under the present discipline, prisoners are not governed by beating, by irons, or any capricious constraints of turnkeys. Convicts, vagabonds, persons accused, unruly, or runaway apprentices, or servants, are not now intermingled and heaped together. Lenity has superseded the abuse of power; cleanliness and comfort take the place of filth and misery. Hence not as many diseases, quarrels, or escapes; a necessity for fewer keepers; less medical assistance, carpenters', or blacksmiths' repairs, &c. The physician's bill actually does not amount to the same by four-fifths; that of the blacksmith has decreased in a still greater proportion. So that this annual overplus expected to arise from the greater economy of one system than the other, would of itself soon form a fund adequate to the reimbursement of such sums as might be necessarily advanced for the purpose of commencing a reform; while the issues and profits of the different establishments of manufactories by the labour of criminals, would afford a clear and considerable gain to the government. But even supposing, for instance, that the whole would occasion an increase of the public taxes, what is it, when placed in competition with the numerous advantages that may follow, the peace of society,

the better security of the lives and property of the persons upon whom those tributes are levied. No orderly citizen would think his mite ill bestowed for purposes of this kind. Legislatures, at every session, employ themselves in enacting laws for cutting new roads, beautifying cities or buildings, and public money expended to accomplish them; while criminal codes lay in the archives of a state, and few are induced to revise them, until the parchments on which they are written become either musty or worm-eaten. At the same time, there offers no where a more ample field for improvement than in the science of forming good penal systems; for of all others it has, in proportion to its magnitude, been the least attended to: and surely few ought to be more interesting, as few are more immediately connected with our happiness. The chief end of civil government is a preservation of the social compact; and as public measures approach to that point, so must they preserve a greater degree of brilliancy, and become more the objects of general admiration.

The prison and its several apartments are under the superintendence of a board or committee of inspectors, with legal powers, chosen from the mass of citizens. The election of one half of them takes place every six months, when those who desire it are generally re-elected. The appointment rests strictly with the mayor and two aldermen of Philadelphia, and the person chosen cannot decline without incurring a penalty of ten pounds; but the common practice latterly has been, that the inspectors going out of office should nominate as their successors, other persons willing to undertake the duty, which is always confirmed. The board consists of twelve, seven of whom form a *quorum*, and meet once a fortnight in the inspectors' room. Two of them are obliged to go over the whole prison together every Monday, and oftener, if occasion requires, who are named *visiting* inspectors. Their duty is to inspect not only the jailer and other officers, but particularly the behaviour and disposition of the prisoners; to see that they are pro-

perly and sufficiently employed; to inquire into their health, and take care that their food is served in quantity and quality agreeably to the directions of the board; that the sick are properly provided for; and that suitable clothing and bedding be furnished to all. They hear the grievances of the prisoners, and bring forward the cases of such whose conduct and circumstances may appear to merit the attention of the board. They cause returns to be made out, by the clerk of the prison, and laid before the committee monthly, of all the prisoners, their crimes, length of confinement, by whom committed, and how discharged since the preceding return. Besides a regular attendance of the *visiting* inspectors, the prison is every day visited by some one or more of the committee. They all take great delight in, and are indefatigable in the execution of the humane task allotted them.

Subject to the directions of the committee are a jaileress, four keepers, one turnkey, and a clerk. The cook, scullion, barber, and other attendants, are convicts, who are credited for their services in proportion to the time and labour they expend. I was surprised to find a female in the first appointment; and, on inquiry, found that her husband was formerly jailer. Discharging the duties of a tender parent towards his daughter, infected with the yellow fever in 1793, he caught the disorder, and died, leaving the prisoners to regret the loss of a friend and protector, and the community that of a valuable citizen. In consideration of his faithful performance of the functions of his office, his widow was nominated to succeed him. She is exceedingly attentive and humane. Your uncle related to me, what to many would appear a curious anecdote of this lady. It occurred in his visit to the prison. After conversing with her for some time, he inquired of her, whether there were no inconveniences attending the institution. With the greatest concern she replied, that there was one, which gave her no small degree of uneasiness: that the debtors in their apartments, from being able to overlook the yard of

the prison, made her fear that their conversing together, swearing, &c. might corrupt the *morals* of her people. You may think it strange, that debtors should corrupt criminals; but the case is really so, for there is certainly as much if not more morality among the latter than the former. And so fully convinced were the inspectors of her apprehensions being well founded, that, to remedy the defect, they have since had the prison wall raised.

Pursuant to the directions of the legislature, the prison is, at stated periods, visited by a committee, consisting of the mayor and a certain number of aldermen, with some of the judges of the supreme court. The governor of the state likewise, the judges and juries of all other courts, pay a visit to the institution during the same intervals of time. These visits were originally intended by the legislature, as well in order to ascertain how far the abolition of the old criminal code would be productive of the means of preventing wickedness and crimes, as to take care that the attention of the inspectors should be unremitted. They are now rendered not so necessary, as the innovation has been crowned with success, and the vigilance of the inspectors not likely to diminish, when none are appointed except upon their request or consent. They nevertheless answer one good end; for the approbation of such respectable committees must at all times tend to increase the care of those entrusted with the management of the house.

There are likewise two other visiting committees, who do not superintend, but notwithstanding have, at any time, from the nature of their duties, free access to the prison. One is from the society for alleviating the miseries of public prisons, who, as before observed, were the chief promoters of the present improvement in the penal code. The only pay attention to that part of the prison where the vagrants and persons confined for trial are lodged, and to whom several of the foregoing salutary regulations do not extend. They afford relief to suffering prisoners, which they have been able to ac-

complish to a considerable extent; partly by means of the annual contributions of the members, and partly by directing the distribution of what is occasionally given in donations. They pay off small fees when the case seems to deserve it, and when the party would perhaps be detained for them in confinement; they also make applications to the magistracy for the enlargement of persons illegally confined, which has sometimes happened from the obscurity and friendless condition of the parties. The other committee comes from "the Society for the gradual Abolition of Slavery," who inquire into the circumstances of every African, or other person of colour, and take care that none are imprisoned illegally. The services of this committee in putting a stop to various acts of oppression and injustice, which otherwise would have taken place either from the tyranny or caprice of *men-holders*, do them infinite honour. No doubt their zeal will increase with their success.

The consequences, I repeat, which have marked the progress of the latest legislative amendments to the criminal laws, have been so favourable, that crimes have actually diminished considerably, as will appear by the annexed tables. The present system too is considered by its friends as still in its infancy. Its effects also on the morals of the prisoners have been no less evident. Re-convictions are seldom heard of. Of all the convicts condemned for these five years past, not above five in a hundred have been known to return; and, to the honour of human nature be it spoken, that some of the convicts, at the expiration of their term of confinement, voluntarily* offered themselves, while the yellow fever raged in Philadelphia, to attend the sick as nurses at Bush hill, and conducted themselves with so much fidelity and tenderness, as to have had the repeated thanks of the managers. Few have been known to stay in the prison the whole of the term to which they were sentenced, the amendment and repentance of many of them being so visible to the inspectors as

* Carey's account of the yellow fever.

to have had a claim on the governor's clemency. Some have appropriated the proceeds of their labour, while in confinement, to the support of their families; and several, on leaving the prison, have received forty or fifty dollars, the overplus of the profits of their labour, and with this capital turned out honest and industrious members of society.

To be Continued.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

ON LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

BETHLEM hospital in Moorfields,* from which the word *bedlam* has been borrowed and applied to mad-houses in general, does not differ much in its internal economy from St. Luke's. Indeed a large part of the building has been lately pulled down, its precincts having been invaded by the growing streets, which seem to render the removal of such an asylum from the heart of a public city, to a more quiet situation, absolutely necessary.

It now contains about 140 patients, who are treated nearly in the same manner as those of St. Luke's; the present master of *this* hospital having lived for many years as keeper of Bethlem. But, in my opinion, the rooms are neither so clean and comfortable, nor so well defended from the cold—nor have the patients of Bethlem the convenience of such large retired airing grounds as are to be seen at St. Luke's: and, how much free exercise in an open air unpolluted with the vapours of a close city must contribute to the restoration of lunatics, will be obvious to every one, not to mention that they are here very accessible to the noise of carriages and waggons rolling in the adjacent streets; or the depressing gloom which their ravings, heard in the stillness of night, by the

casual passenger, must occasion—as I have often experienced when passing near the walls of this hospital. I believe these circumstances have already had weight with the governors; and it is probable that before long a more eligible situation will be found for a building of so much importance. It is however still a venerable structure; and claims our admiration as well for its age, as for its past usefulness.*

There is a small establishment for the insane at Guy's hospital, in the borough of Southwark, that appears to be very well managed. Incurables only are admitted, and the present number does not exceed 26, who are all females and superintended by a very intelligent female keeper. The building is formed something like the letter Y, with two short galleries (having opposite cells) and a central square apartment for the keeper, from which both galleries are overlooked. There is one day room in each wing or horn of the building, near the central apartment; and a strong grated iron door defends this room at each side from the galleries. This establishment has one or two peculiarities which may be worth noticing. All the boxes, in which the patients lie upon straw, placed in the cells, as I have described them to be at St. Luke's, are lined with lead; and instead of the moisture draining through small holes in the false bottom at the foot of the bed, it is carried by the declivity, which gradually sinks in an oblique direction from the head towards the foot, into a small hole in the corner nearest the outward wall, where it is received into a pipe or conduit that runs all the length of the gallery at the outside. The master of St. Luke's informed me this was his suggestion; and I believe it has tended much to the cleanliness of the patients;

* "Bethlem hospital was originally a priory, founded by Simon Fitzroy, sheriff of London, in the year 1247, the members of which wore a star in commemoration of the star that guided the wise men on the birth of Christ, whence it derives its name. It was granted by Henry the eighth to the city for the cure of lunatics." *Higmore Pictus Londæ.*

* "The design of this hospital was taken from the Chateau de Tuilleries at Paris; the centre and wings of stone, with Corinthian pilasters, but the body of brick. Louis XIV. was so much offended at this copy of his palace, that he ordered a plan of St. James' palace to be taken for offices of a very inferior nature."

Vid. Higmore Palatæ Londæ.